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## Third Committee

**Summary record of the 29th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 1 November 2001, at 3 p.m.

*Chairman*: Mr. Al-Hinai ..... (Oman)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.*

**Agenda item 109: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing** (*continued*)

*Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.6/Rev.1: Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing*

1. **Mr. Alaei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the only amendment to the draft resolution was the reinsertion of paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.6, which read "*Invites* the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat to continue, in cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the host country, the information campaign for the Second World Assembly on Ageing". That paragraph had been the subject of lengthy negotiations and consultations with many delegations on account of its programme budget implications. He requested that action on the draft resolution should be deferred because one delegation had just informed him that it was still awaiting instructions from its Government regarding the content of the paragraph in question.

2. *Action on draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.6/Rev.1 was deferred.*

**Agenda item 110: Crime prevention and criminal justice** (*continued*)

*Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.15/Rev.1: Combating the criminal misuse of information technologies*

3. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

4. **Ms. Newell** (Secretary of the Committee) read out the revision made by the principal sponsor when the resolution was introduced.

5. **The Chairman** read out the names of the delegations that wished to be added to the list of sponsors.

6. **Mr. Rabby** (United States of America) made a number of revisions to the draft resolution. In the second preambular paragraph, the comma following the word "education" should be deleted and the phrase "democracy and good governance" should be replaced by the phrase "and democratic governance". In the sixth preambular paragraph, the word "noting" should be replaced by the words "recognizing also". In operative paragraph 1, a comma should be inserted after the word "law" and before the word "policy", the words "and regional" should be inserted after the word "international" and the paragraph should end with the word "organizations". Lastly, in paragraph 2, the word "misuses" should be replaced by the word "misuse".

7. He announced that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had withdrawn as a sponsor of the draft resolution, leaving a total of 77 sponsors, and expressed his hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

8. **The Chairman** announced that Belarus, El Salvador, Nepal, Nicaragua and Swaziland wished to add their names to the list of cosponsors.

9. *Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.15/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.*

*Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.17/Rev.1: Strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity*

10. **Ms. Newell** (Secretary of the Committee) read out the revisions made by the principal sponsor when the draft resolution was introduced.

11. She then read out a statement by the Controller, transmitted by the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, regarding the requests made to the Secretary-General in paragraphs 4 and 18 of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.17. The resources proposed by the Secretary-General were contained in his proposed programme budget for Section 14, Crime prevention and criminal justice. In resolution 45/248, part B VI, the General Assembly had reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters, had also reaffirmed the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, had expressed its concern at the tendency of its substantive Committees and other intergovernmental bodies to involve themselves in administrative and budgetary matters and had invited the Secretary-General to provide all intergovernmental bodies with the required information regarding procedures for administrative and budgetary matters. The Controller and the staff in

his office stood ready to provide the Committee with all relevant information regarding those procedures.

12. **The Chairman** mentioned the delegations that had become sponsors when the draft resolution was introduced.

13. **Ms. Borzi** (Italy) said that Argentina, Guinea, Hungary, Panama and Senegal had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

14. **The Chairman** announced that Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Eritrea, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania had become sponsors.

15. **Ms. Samah** (Algeria) said that her delegation deeply regretted that the sponsors had not managed to take advantage of the current international mobilization against terrorism to strengthen the human and financial capacity of the section of the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention that dealt with terrorism-related activities. The draft, as presented, neither reflected the priority accorded to the question by the international community nor addressed the concerns expressed in that regard by her delegation, which had joined the consensus with great difficulty and would like that statement to appear in the record and in the Committee's report.

16. *Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.17/Rev.1, as orally amended, was adopted.*

**Agenda item 112: Advancement of women** (*continued*)

*Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.23: Traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls*

17. **The Chairman** informed the members of the Committee that the draft had no programme budget implications, mentioned the delegations that had joined the sponsors listed in the draft resolution at the time of its introduction and indicated that the original list of sponsors should include Mauritius instead of Mauritania.

18. **Ms. Valkenburg** (Netherlands) said that Bhutan, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka and the United Republic of Tanzania had become sponsors of the draft resolution, which her delegation hoped would be adopted without a vote.

19. **The Chairman** noted that Burkina Faso and the Marshall Islands wished to become sponsors of the draft resolution.

20. *Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.23 was adopted.*

21. **Mr. Davison** (United States of America) said that his delegation was pleased to join the consensus. With regard to the ninth preambular paragraph, it felt strongly that harmful traditional or customary practices constituted a very serious form of violence against women and girls, but that, because only States could violate human rights, was unable to agree that such practices constituted a "serious violation of their human rights". Regarding the twelfth preambular paragraph, it was premature to take note with appreciation of a draft protocol not yet finalized or approved by the body charged with its preparation. His delegation understood that the term "reproductive health services" as contained in operative paragraph 3 (f) did not refer to abortion services.

*Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.25: United Nations Development Fund for Women*

22. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications and mentioned the delegations that had become sponsors when the draft resolution was introduced.

23. **Mr. Francis** (Jamaica) said that Mauritius and Sweden had become sponsors of the draft resolution, which his delegation hoped would be adopted without a vote.

24. **The Chairman** announced that Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Chad, El Salvador, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Liechtenstein, Morocco, the Niger, Norway and Senegal wished to become sponsors.

25. *Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.25 was adopted.*

*Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*

26. **Ms. Newell** (Secretary of the Committee) said that under the terms of paragraph 13 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would acknowledge the number of reports awaiting consideration by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and, in that regard, decide to authorize it to hold, on an exceptional basis, a three-week session in 2002 to be used entirely for the

consideration of the reports of the States parties in order to reduce the backlog of reports, and to enlarge the membership of the pre-session working group in 2002 in order to prepare for the exceptional session of CEDAW, taking into account the latter's decision 25/1.

27. In that regard, the programme budget implications, estimated at $252,900, were contained in annex VII to the report of CEDAW (A/56/38). That amount would be charged against the contingency fund for the biennium 2002-2003 and the Fifth Committee would be so informed for action to be taken thereon upon the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26 by the Third Committee.

28. **The Chairman** mentioned the delegations that had become sponsors when the draft resolution was introduced.

29. **Ms. Suikkari** (Finland) announced that Cambodia, Colombia, Georgia, Indonesia, South Africa and Togo had become sponsors.

30. **The Chairman** announced that Bangladesh, Belarus, Burkina Faso, El Salvador, the Gambia, Ghana, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Congo and Zimbabwe had become sponsors.

31. *Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26 was adopted.*

32. **Mr. Davison** (United States of America) said that, even though the United States strongly supported the elimination of discrimination against women, it could not join the consensus in adopting the draft resolution because of the programme budget implications of operative paragraph 13, which would increase the cost of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women by $250,000, or 25 per cent, in the next United Nations budget, without providing a clear justification of the need for the added costs.

33. The United States also objected to the reference made to the Convention in paragraph 2. While it was appropriate for the General Assembly to recommend international conventions for the consideration of Member States, the Assembly must recognize that signing and ratifying was ultimately a decision for domestic Governments. The current text, which urged all States that had not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so, did not recognize the sovereignty of Governments in that respect.

34. With regard to paragraph 6, the criteria for judging reservations to all treaties were those reflected in the Vienna Conventions on the Law of Treaties, which governed the admissibility and acceptability of reservations.

35. **Ms. Kok** Li Peng (Singapore) said that, while Singapore supported the general thrust of the draft resolution, she wished to make a statement in explanation of position on the question of permissible reservations, since the draft resolution urged States Parties to "review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them".

36. Like all other international treaties, the Convention was subject to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which had drawn a distinction between permissible and impermissible reservations, based on their compatibility with the object and purpose of the relevant treaties. Article 19 of the Vienna Convention explicitly permitted reservations that were compatible with the object and purpose of the relevant Convention. In the same vein, article 28, paragraph 2, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women forbade only those reservations that were incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention. Concerned at the apparent trend to discourage reservations, Singapore therefore felt that it was inappropriate to insist that States Parties regularly review reservations with a view to withdrawing them.

37. **Ms. Hashimoto** (Japan) said that, given the increasing number of States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the entry into force of the Optional Protocol thereto, both the workload of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the backlog of periodic reports awaiting consideration were expected to continue to increase. However, the problem should not be addressed by repeatedly extending the length of the annual session, but by adopting drastic and lasting measures to streamline the Committee's work in the medium and long term.

38. In a spirit of cooperation and fully recognizing the urgent need to reduce the backlog of reports awaiting consideration, her delegation had not blocked the consensus and the Government of Japan proposed to continue to contribute actively to all genuine efforts to improve and strengthen the work of the Committee.

*Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.27: Violence against women migrant workers*

39. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.27 had no programme budget implications and mentioned the delegations that had become sponsors when the draft was introduced.

40. **Ms. Newell** (Secretary of the Committee) read out the oral revisions made by the principal sponsor when introducing the draft resolution.

41. **Ms. Garcia** (Philippines) said that Sri Lanka had become a sponsor of the draft resolution, which she hoped could be adopted by consensus.

42. **The Chairman** said that Bolivia, Burkina Faso, El Salvador, Eritrea, Haiti, Mozambique and Nigeria had also become sponsors of the draft resolution.

43. Draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.27, as orally revised, was adopted.

*The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.*